



LETTERS OF A PHYSICIAN TO HIS DAUGHTERS

By F. A. Rupp, M. D.

THESE LETTERS give information in a clean manner upon a subject, the ignorance of which has caused untold suffering and even death to countless women.

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PURITY AND TRUTH

LETTERS
of a Physician to
His Daughters
on The Great Black Plague

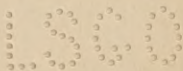
By F. A. RUPP, M.D.



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DEDICATED

TO MY MOTHER, WHOSE LIFE WAS AN **EXEMPLIFICA-**
TION OF PURITY ;

TO MY DAUGHTERS, THAT THEY MAY HAVE INHER-
ITED AND MAY RETAIN THAT PEARL
OF GREAT PRICE ;

TO ALL DAUGHTERS AND SISTERS, THAT, KNOW-
ING ITS VALUE, THEY MAY LIVE ITS
LIFE, THEREBY SECURING HEALTH,
HONOR, HAPPINESS.

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Preface.

DURING the past winter I devoted a part of my time in personally going before young men, and discussing with them, in a frank, free, candid and open manner, the subject of social impurities. I visited a number of towns and cities, addressing young men on the subject, "The Great Black Plague." I found the interest intense, and was repeatedly asked why I did not deliver a similar lecture to young girls.

It is very true that the subject of the impure diseases does interest or concern young women even to a

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greater degree than it does young men; and pity 'tis, 'tis true.

It is the lives of our young girls that are wrecked, not through their own viciousness, but through what should be the sacred rite of marriage. Their purity is violated, their health destroyed; their lives very often sacrificed to the great god, Ignorance.

Only physicians know how many young girls, who during their young girlhood were robust and strong, must attribute their ill health to pernicious marriages with young men who were pleased to "sow their wild oats" during their young manhood and their young wives later must help reap the impure harvest!

This little treatise is not offered to

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the daughters of the land as a complete discussion of the great question of the "Social Evil." If it were complete, perhaps its usefulness would be impaired by its very completeness.

These letters are intended to be only a little heart to heart talk with young girls that they may no longer rush headlong into a life of unnecessary suffering, dishonor, and disgrace, if not death itself—and very often death would be preferable.

These short letters are offered to daughters and to sisters in response to many requests for a brief, clear, easily understood statement of the facts regarding the social diseases everywhere prevalent.

If this little treatise shall prevent

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only one young girl from marrying a diseased young man, it shall not have been written in vain. Such is its mission.

Lewistown, Pennsylvania, U. S. A.

January 1st, 1910.

THE FIRST LETTER

The First Letter

MY DEAR DAUGHTERS:

For a long time, indeed from the day you, my daughters, left your father and mother to engage upon your studies at Professor Blank's School, I have contemplated writing to you upon a subject which is not only your right to know, but about which we, as your parents, ever anxious for your health and welfare, ought to have informed you ere this.

Your mother, as are thousands upon thousands of other mothers, has been just a little unwilling to assume her duty as a teacher for her girls; as a consequence of such unwillingness

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upon the part of mothers and fathers too, many a girl's life has been wrecked, after having been violently tossed about by the rapids and whirlpools of her own ignorance.

I do not propose to have your lives, my dear girls, thus wrecked by leaving you in ignorance of those things that wreck so many young women. I therefore am taking this opportunity, and all other opportunities as afforded, to write you a letter, or letters, upon this subject which has been so utterly neglected by parents and by other equally responsible factors of society, such as the public press, the pulpit, and public educators. Accept then this letter from a physician to his daughters, written with a fath-

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er's love and a physician's knowledge.

A few years ago, a minister called at my office to inquire about a certain man who was engaged to marry a young girl who was an active member of his church. The girl wanted to know if the young man was physically fit to marry.

In a general way, she had learned that there are certain conditions which unfit a man or woman for marriage, and for some reason her suspicions had evidently been aroused concerning her own fiance; with her, love was not blind.

Now it happens, as you girls perhaps know, that there is a professional rule which binds a physician

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to secrecy regarding his patients' affairs; so even if I had known this young man professionally, which I did not, I as an honorable physician could not have given the desired knowledge.

A year or more after the minister's visit to my office, I became the wife's attendant. It is no breach of professional etiquette to tell you, my girls, that this young wife in the brief period of one year had been transformed from a robust, healthful, happy girl to a wrecked woman—a woman who forever shall be deprived of the blessings and privileges of parenthood. And her pitiful cry was, "Had I only known!" But ignorance had claimed its victim; death

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only was lacking to complete the wreck.

During my life as an active practitioner of medicine, I was forced to see Ignorance jealously and mercilessly demanding its toll, and finally a little voice awoke me to action, my conscience pricked me—what had I done to prevent you, *my own* dear daughters, from being needlessly and ruthlessly sacrificed upon the altar of Ignorance?

I count it therefore my duty as a father, and my right as a physician to write you this joint letter; writing in a clear, plain, frank, free, yet dignified manner upon a subject that so vitally concerns the girls of our nation.

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This letter you may share with your girl friends, for I want *all* girls to know concerning those things about which I want my own daughters to know. My dear girls, I want you to know, and I want you to know aright. May the time never, never come when that pitiful wail, "Had I only known!" shall be your only excuse for a life of ruin and dishonor! It is the *ignorant* mariner who becomes the *wrecked* mariner.

Some time ago, whilst traveling upon a railway train, I shared my seat with a kindly looking old lady. With a degree of curiosity which was not altogether unwarranted, she asked me where I was going. I replied that I was on my way to deliver

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a lecture to young men. Showing further interest, she asked the subject of my lecture.

"Social Purity," I replied.

"For heaven's sake, what is that?" asked this good old lady who had nearly lived her three score years and ten without a knowledge even of the existence of these social evils that are surrounding us, and threatening us on all sides, poisoning our social relations, our amusements, our literature, our drama, our art, exhaling a deadly influence whose venom shall continue through heredity to fester in generations to come.

And likewise it is a fact that the great majority of our girls are not aware of the existence of these im-

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moralties which society has agreed to call "Social Evils," and to these evils it is the *ignorant* young man and the *ignorant* young woman who fall an easy prey. It is with the sincere hope of being able to help dispel the universal ignorance of our girls upon this subject of the social impurities that I am writing to you, my daughters.

The national curse is not profanity, nor is it Sabbath desecration, nor is it intemperance, though these are national traits which are to be deplored. The curse of our own dear country was the curse of Assyria and Egypt; it was the curse of Greece and Rome, and that curse is this curse of social impurities.

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Before going further let me explain what I mean by social impurities. By social impurities, I mean those diseases which arise directly or indirectly from social immoralities, from social indiscretions on the part of young men and young women, especially these two diseases, Gonorrhea and Syphilis, the first a local, urethral inflammation due to a distinct germ which is transmitted during indiscreet acts; the second a specific systemic infection, likewise due to a specific germ, and likewise transmitted during indiscreet acts, and which may also be transmitted even through such a medium as the ubiquitous drinking cup.

It is concerning these two diseases

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especially that I want to inform you girls, in order that you and your friends need never utter the hopeless, awful wail, "Had I only known!"

Many young women come to our offices with the same pitiful tale,—strong, healthful, robust girls before marriage; after marriage with hollow eyes, with sunken cheeks, tottering shadows of their former selves!

Wherefore the difference? Is this difference a necessary accompaniment of marriage? If so, marriage would be a tragedy rather than a sacred relation ordained of God.

There *are* these tragedies of marriage, but such tragedies are due to those diseases which I have just mentioned.

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Why are there such tragedies of marriage, you ask. Could it be otherwise, when we consider the astonishing fact that chastity in the young man is the exception rather than the rule?

My dear daughters, do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that this great army of unchaste young men is recruited *only* from the ranks of those naturally bad and vicious; for in the army of the impure diseased young men, are found those who are otherwise noble men, true men, but misguided, thoughtless men, men who go headlong to disease and ruin because of lack of knowledge upon a subject concerning which they should be intelligent.

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Yet, whether these men are recruited through ignorance or viciousness, it matters not, the results are the same for the pure, innocent girls who are literally trapped in the bonds of an impure alliance.

Our false system of education demands that young men and young women be kept ignorant of matters pertaining to sexual hygiene.

The public press opens its pages to disgusting details of domestic infelicities and social scandals, yet rigorously excludes all mention of these devastating diseases.

The clergy, with but few exceptions, close the pulpit to all discussions of the vices of immorality.

Public educators teach the hygiene

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of all the organs of the body except the organs of reproduction, that most sacred function ordained of God for the continuance of the race.

Parents remain totally silent regarding these various questions of "self and sex," and then wonder why their sons and daughters go astray.

The mother who is too modest to prepare her daughter for the physiological function attendant upon her entrance upon womanhood is very often the same mother who perforce laments the disgrace of the same daughter, betrayed by a wily suitor. And how often is it the ignorant daughter whose illegitimate child disgraces the parents who reared her in her ignorance! How many young

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girls, who had once been innocent, bear the scarlet letter flaming upon their breasts, because of their ignorance! Society can frown upon their sin; society can brand the scarlet letter upon their breasts, but the same society, because of modesty and shame, cannot and will not instruct the growing girl how the scarlet shame is to be avoided.

Not long ago, a gentleman took his seventeen-year-old daughter, just as I took you, my dear girls, to a large and fashionable preparatory school. He was especially anxious in his inquiries as to whether there were any vicious girls in the school, and said, "My daughter is as *innocent* as a baby, and her mother and I wish to keep her so."

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Thus innocence has been confounded with ignorance by the majority of parents. I have learned that it is as impossible as it is undesirable to keep young men and young women ignorant of matters pertaining to their sex. They will learn. But how, and when? They may learn too late, or they may learn from false teachers, or they may learn from experience, and in all cases the results are almost always bound to be bad; dire diseases may be contracted, or the scarlet letter may be branded during the very processes of learning. To save you, my dear daughters, and all other girls from such direful futures is the purpose of my letter.

There is indeed an army of the im-

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pure, and Ignorance has been the recruiting officer. In the last thousand and more years, society has been cursed by three great physical evils,—small-pox, the great white plague, otherwise known as tuberculosis, and these social, impure diseases which we might justly call “The Great Black Plague.” Notwithstanding the senseless wails and the feeble argumentation of those opposed to vaccination, yet it is a fact that the control of small-pox has been rendered possible only by educating the people to the value of vaccination, and through such education men of science have made small-pox a curiosity.

And likewise, with the discovery

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of the cause of tuberculosis, with the dissemination of truth as to its modes of contagion, the death-knell of tuberculosis has been sounded; public discussion and public education shall also make tuberculosis a curiosity.

The value of education has been applied for the prevention of all the communicable diseases, and yet an exception has been made of these social diseases which are the most essentially human of all diseases. Through their frequent introduction into marriage, they, more than all other diseases are the most dangerous to the welfare of the family, and the welfare of the family underlies the welfare of the race. Regarding these diseases, society has sown to the wind

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of silence, and society is reaping the whirlwind of infection and death.

Even the medical profession has been silent on this question. The medical profession has had special opportunities to receive knowledge and to impart instruction. But up to the present time their knowledge has been a light hidden under a bushel. Our medical journals at the present time are filled with discussions concerning these social diseases, their effects upon the innocent daughters of society, and various methods for a solution of the intolerable evil; but these discussions do not reach you, my dear girls, nor your many, many sisters.

I have therefore assumed the re-

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sponsibility of so condensing the facts concerning these diseases that they may appeal to you and to all other girls that perchance may read them.

Thus far, my daughters, I have made only one point; I have emphasized ignorance as the most important factor in the dissemination of these impure diseases.

Now then, of what facts are you and most other girls ignorant?

Ignorance to a large degree is the cause of the social evil; what is the social evil?

I have mentioned gonorrhea and syphilis as the two diseases which I

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would especially include under the head of the social, impure diseases. It is not my purpose primarily to reach those despised, fallen creatures of your sex who voluntarily become victims of their own viciousness. I want first to reach the innocent daughters of society who, through the sacred marriage relation, become diseased victims of man's ignorance or viciousness, or both.

I want you, my own daughters, to know, and to know thoroughly what is involved in this whole question of these social diseases, so that you shall avoid an impure marriage with its direful concomitants; and I also want all other girls and their parents to become acquainted with the facts,

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that their daughters may be saved from the same fate.

Do you, my girls, have any idea as to the fearful prevalence of these social diseases? After giving you a few statistics regarding the universal prevalence of these impure diseases among young men, you perhaps will appreciate the extreme importance of parents supervising by careful inquiry the young men calling upon their daughters.

As these venereal, or impure, diseases are totally ignored by Sanitary Bureaus and Boards of Health in the registration of the infectious diseases, we have no official data of statistical character from which to make accurate calculations as to the frequency of

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these diseases. But—and it is a sad commentary upon the morality of the male members of society that these facts are true, but they are true; if there are any mistakes in my figures the mistakes are that they are too low, and is not the truth of these figures sufficient proof that under our present system of education the *un-moral* youth in trying to distinguish the immoral from the moral himself becomes *immoral*?—but I say, we do know that sixty per cent. of the adult male population contract gonorrhea and that twelve per cent. contract syphilis.

These figures are disputed by many social workers as being too high; let us hope that the figures are

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wrong and that the condition is not so deplorable as some medical authorities would have us believe.

Let me put these percentages in figures; it is estimated that in this country alone every year, 770,000 young boys reach the age of maturity. My percentages mean that of this number more than 450,000 young men will enroll themselves in the great army of the diseased.

Think of it, 450,000 out of 770,000 young men, in this country alone, soiled in body and soul!

The startling statement is also made upon good authority, that there is more venereal infection and disease among innocent, unoffending *mar-*

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ried women than among their despised sisters of ill repute.

Men ignorantly contract these diseases during their young manhood when sowing their wild oats, and then after marriage just as ignorantly infect the wives whom they have vowed to love, to honor, to cherish, to protect. Are not young girls justified in regarding with suspicion "the fast young man," the young man who has already sown his wild oats?

Let me put the situation to you in a few brief sentences. There has been prevalent a wide-spread and an erroneous idea that a young man "can see the world," that he can "sow his wild oats," that he can be as "fast," as he sees fit, that he can live a life of

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impurity and indecency, and then, when the time comes for him to settle down to make his own home, that young man above all others is the proper mate for some man's daughter; he, it is mistakenly thought, can throw off his past to become decent as easily as he removes his clothes to take a bath. It is thought that having seen the world during his young manhood, he is the man who after marriage will have no desire to forsake his own fireside to further pursue his youthful orgies.

But, my dear girls, whatever the world and society may decree, I *know* that that young man is not a fit husband for my daughters, and hence, for any man's daughters.

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I would have every father and every mother jealously guard their daughters against such a young man. Apart from the moral side, physically speaking, every young man, with but few exceptions—and I would not risk the exceptions—who engages upon a life of looseness and debauchery, frequenting houses of ill repute, or associating clandestinely with bad characters *is not* a fit companion for my daughters or for any man's daughters.

Young men as a rule are totally ignorant of the dangerous nature and the disastrous and far-reaching consequences of these social diseases, and being thus ignorant, it makes but lit-

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tle difference to them whether they contract them or not.

If young men are ignorant concerning the nature and results of these diseases, so much the more are young girls ignorant. Therefore, to enlighten you, my dear girls, upon this feature of our subject, let me give you a few more statistics. Eighty per cent. of the blindness in the newborn is due to gonorrheal infection; hence nearly all babies "born blind" are not so born, but acquire blindness because of the "wild oats" sown by their fathers, and because the innocent mothers unknowingly contracted gonorrhea.

Twenty per cent. of all blindness is thus caused, and there are at present writing, so it is computed, 30,000

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blind persons in Germany, their blindness due to this disease which young men consider so trifling, which some young men consider "no worse than a cold in the head;" and what a tragedy of life is blindness!

It is said that hereditary syphilis kills in France alone every year 20,000 infants, and our country is fast becoming a close competitor of France.

It is not generally known that forty-five per cent. of the involuntarily childless marriages are due to gonorrheal infection, and that fifty per cent. of women, and twenty per cent. of men, who have been thus infected, are denied the privileges and blessings of parenthood, but while

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these facts are not generally known they are nevertheless true.

Considering these vital statistics, is it not important that you, my dear girls, and that all the daughters of the land, should be careful in the choice of a life-mate? Is it not extremely important that your parents, with your co-operation, should shield you against such possibilities as just mentioned? The young man with society's sanction sows his wild oats and in many instances his future children go to the asylum for the blind and his wife to the hospital, if not to her grave. Is not this subject worthy the attention of our girls?

If the walls of hospitals were endowed with tongues, as walls are

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supposed to be endowed with ears, what wonderful stories they could tell! But hospital walls have no tongues and we must speak for them.

Some time ago it was my duty to assist at an operation during which an innocent woman was unsexed. Innocent? The sin of a husband who in his early youth sowed his wild oats! A prominent surgeon recently made the statement that he had just completed his four hundredth unsex-ing operation, and then he added, "I am positive that seventy-five per cent., almost all of them in *married* women, were the results of gonorrheal infection."

A thousand times rather would I have you, my daughters, remain un-

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married than that such should be your fate.

That most pitiful, though too late, cry of the bride, "Had I only known!" is equaled only by the lamentation of her husband, "I thought I was cured."

One of my patients in the agony of his soul made this confession: He said, "Doctor, I was married to a pure, noble girl, five years after an attack of gonorrhea, and I honestly believed myself cured."

"Well, were you not cured?" I inquired.

"Oh, no sir," he replied, "but my wife, thank God, never knew the cause of her illness."

"But how is it now?" I asked.

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“Alas, doctor, I lost her; she died of blood-poisoning after the first baby was born.”

And that death, my girls, was attributed by the neighbors and by the community to the necessary dangers incident to child-birth, whereas in reality it was a death due to the “wild oats” sown by that young husband during his young manhood; at that age when he should have been storing up robust health to enable him to support a possible family, he was in truth storing up disease for himself and death for his future wife. And his pitiful excuse was, “I thought I was cured!”

To save you and other equally innocent women from such misery and

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shame, if not from death itself, to save your future children from suffering and pain, I considered it proper to write this letter; I believe it is our duty as parents and physicians to warn young men and young women against these dangers, dispelling ignorance concerning them as we are attempting to dispel ignorance concerning other equally infectious, though less dangerous diseases.

Now, my daughters, I have discussed these diseases, more or less briefly, and I have warned you against the possible fate of the girl who inquires more anxiously about the size of her fiance's pocket-book than about his character, who may

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even marry such a purse, hoping perchance to reform the man.

For six nights in the week a young man may "sow wild oats," and on the seventh he is not only tolerated but actually welcomed in the parlor of a respectable girl; thus there has originated the so-called "double standard of morality," one degree—there can be only one degree of chastity, but I am giving society's version—of chastity for men, another degree of chastity for women. Society thus tolerates in her men what she condemns in her women. Under these conditions there have arisen three classes of persons: first, the pure, the innocent, if ignorant, the self-respecting young girl; secondly, the degraded,

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unhappy, tinselled being whose very name is a shame to speak, she who is scorned and insulted as the vilest of her sex, she who is doomed to disease and an early death, she who has appeared in every age as the perpetual symbol of man's degradation and sinfulness, hounded from garret to cellar, hunted by the police as a sort of wild animal, an outcast, she who, my dear girls, belongs to the same sex as do you yourselves; and, thirdly, the young men who with society's consent go from the first to the second class, and from the second class back to the first class, the same young men who visit the second class while they marry into the first class. And methinks, sweet is the revenge of the fal-

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len creatures whose disease is transmitted to the innocent daughters of society through the sacred marriage rite!

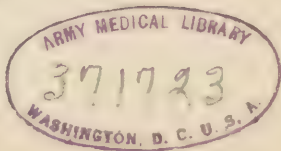
Women are the most pitiless and unrelenting in their ostracism of those of their sex who have crossed the Rubicon of virtue, and at the same time they tolerate and even welcome the very men who demand that there be these women on the wrong side of the Rubicon of virtue. Virtuous mothers shield with all possible care their own daughters from the contamination of a fallen sister and at the same time they smile upon the young man who has caused that sister to fall.

And, my dear girls, consider the

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rich American fool who actually purchases for his own daughter, for his own flesh and blood a titled husband who has spent his substance in riotous living, that substance spent indeed in the support of his foreign mistresses, and the debt thus incurred paid with the gold and very often with the health or life of his new American wife! What is more disgusting to the real type of American manhood and womanhood than this trading of our American girls for dissipated titles!

The great gulf that society has fixed between the virtuous maiden and her fallen sister, society has bridged over by social conventions, and over this bridge society allows



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her men to pass and to repass. To a woman who has once crossed this bridge there is no return, and you, my girls, know this to be true.

It is the libertine who is the germ carrier from the fallen, despised creature of the brothel to the pure, innocent, unknowing girl whom he marries; it is the libertine who makes possible such conditions under which seventy-five per cent. of unsexing surgical operations are done, not upon the occupants of the brothel, but upon innocent, unoffending *married* women. Such is the penalty that our girls are paying for tolerating this "double standard of morality."

My warning to you, my dear girls,

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and to all girls is this—Banish from your society the libertine!

I take this opportunity to ask all parents to banish from their homes, from the society of their daughters the man who cannot furnish a clean bill of health; and I make this same promise for you, my daughters, and I ask your co-operation in this effort to keep our own home free from the libertine.

You, my daughters, might ask me how I would obtain a clean bill of health from a young man who was seeking social access to my home. And right here let me say that the possession of a clean bill of health must never be taken for granted. Social caste, either of high or low de-

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gree, is not proof positive. Church standing alone, even though the young man be an elder or a deacon, will not open my doors. A fat purse cannot purchase access to my home, though it may gain entrance to the best medical clinics in the land.

Parents cannot secure such a clean bill of health from the young man's medical attendant, as I have elsewhere indicated.

How then is the desired knowledge to be secured? Well, my girls, I would secure it in this way, and I advise the same plan of procedure for the use of all parents. I would go directly to the young man himself. I would ask him if he were free from all impure diseases. The clean young

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man would proudly give the desired information; if otherwise, he would possibly declare that I was impertinent; with an oath upon his lips, he would possibly declare it was none of my business. I would then declare to him that I naturally presume the impossibility of his furnishing such a clean bill of health, and I would further declare to him, then and there, that henceforth my doors would be closed to him.

Furthermore, I would then come to you, my daughters, and I would frankly and freely tell you why I closed my doors to that young man. If every father would do this for the daughter whose life is as precious to him as is his own, whose health is

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equally precious, there would be fewer tragedies of marriage, and the divorce mill would grind more slowly.

The so-called "medical secret" prevents the physician of the young man infected with gonorrhea or syphilis from informing his prospective bride as to his condition, and for that reason would I as your father, not as a physician, go directly to the young man himself.

It is true that a foolish girl might marry in spite of her father's admonition against a certain young man; if so, the father may well wash his hands, even though it be with his own tears, and her future welfare shall be of her own making. A father's re-

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sponsibility ends with a daughter's obstinacy.

It is true, also, that a young man may be able to deceive even a most exacting father, but this ought to be rare.

It seems to me that nothing should be left undone by parents—as I hope to leave nothing undone for you, my daughters,—to guard our daughters from such a tragedy of marriage as I here quote:

* “A young man married two years after he had contracted syphilis. Within a year his wife had a spontaneous miscarriage, her child having been destroyed by the taint inherited

*Quoted from numerous instances of a similar character given by “The Chicago Society of Social Hygiene.”

from the father. A year later she gave birth to a puny child which bore the marks of the same disease.

“Soon after the birth of this child the father, who had apparently enjoyed good health, awoke one morning to find his right arm and leg completely paralyzed and his ability to utter words abolished, his paralysis resulting from syphilitic disease of the blood-vessels in the brain. He gradually regained his power of speech and the use of his paralyzed limbs, though unable to earn a living for over a year. During this time the family was dependent for subsistence upon the charity of relatives. He will probably have more trouble from the same cause.”

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What a situation! What a spectacle for a young wife, for a child, for a family, without speaking of moral punishment and financial ruin! And, my dear girls, add to this a possible, yea, a probable infection of the wives in most similar cases, and you shall understand what I mean by a tragedy of marriage.

Only a few weeks ago I was on a railway train traveling to a boys' preparatory school for the purpose of delivering my lecture on "Social Purity, or The Great Black Plague." Whilst on the train I noticed in the newspaper which I was reading an account of a skillful operation performed on a man for the grafting of a new nose from the skin

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of his arm, his nose having been totally destroyed by "specific disease;" the newspaper called the disease *specific*, and syphilis was the specific disease intended, but principally only physicians would know that fact.

But why should I unnecessarily lengthen my letter by citing further examples? See, however, in what embarrassing, soul-stirring positions the honorable physician is sometimes placed, and I quote again: * "A beautiful, refined, cultured young girl whom a certain physician had brought into the world, of whose family the old doctor was long a faithful friend, was about to be mar-

*Dr. Morrow in "Social Diseases and Marriage."

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ried. The doctor knew the prospective bridegroom; he had attended him for syphilis and was still attending him for that condition at the time the marriage was to take place. For a man thus afflicted to marry is not only a horrible action, but a crime, a really moral and physical murder. The good old doctor went to the young man and showed him the infamy of his conduct. The latter replied that he cared little or nothing for the girl; but she was rich and would save him from bankruptcy. What was to be done? The rule of the medical profession is strict; even in such a case it could not be broken. The scoundrel knew this and told the doctor so. 'Very well, sir,' re-

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plied the honorable old man, 'if you are unwilling to forsake your prey, I will snatch it from you. To-morrow evening a wedding theatre party is to be given; if this wedding compact is not broken to-morrow morning, to-morrow evening, at the theatre I will strike you in the face.' The courage of the faithful old physician overcame the coward, and the wedding ceremony was prevented."

Need I tell you, my girls, that a tragedy was thereby averted by an honorable physician? The method of the old man may be a little too dramatic for most doctors, but in all instances parents should know their prospective sons-in-law, and daughters should co-operate with their pa-

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rents to make this possible; there is absolutely no place for clandestine engagements; their motive is bad, and their results still worse.

Confide in your parents; ask them to protect you against such tragedies as I have enumerated. Every young girl—and I cannot emphasize this too strongly—should demand of the man whom she would marry that he be as clean and as pure as he *demand*s her to be. Would a young man marry a girl whom he knows to be living an impure, unclean life? Why do not our girls demand the same sort of husbands for themselves? Virtue in the woman is a pearl of great price, indeed of inestimable price, for with-

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out virtue she is ostracised from society, and rightly so.

Why not place our men on the same level? It is for you, my girls, and for all other girls, to demand of your and their future husbands that degree of virtue which those husbands shall demand as essential in their wives.

The solution of this great Social Evil is the great question of our age. I admit that from the very nature of the question, a question hitherto tabooed from polite society, its solution seems almost insurmountable.

Various solutions have been proposed for this intolerable situation, but improvement has not followed. Moral reform, legislative enactment,

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sanitary regulations, all are remedies, but none of them are *the* remedy. These forces are forces which move but slowly and are not immediately available for the prevention of these social, immoral diseases.

In the meantime the forces of these evils are continuously active. My dear girls, those laboratories of vice conducted by the fellow-creatures of your sex, those infamous dens which infect city, town, and hamlet, from which there belch forth untold suffering and wretchedness as from a hideous inferno, those laboratories turn out every day and every night new cases of infection which blight the family and ramify through every rank and order of society. It is this

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condition of society, ever active, ever present, that you, my daughters, and your sisters throughout this broad land must meet. How are you to meet it?—that is the question.

The parents' responsibility in this matter is great and can no longer, through modesty and timidity, be avoided.

The young boy must be taught that he can live a life as pure and as clean as does his sister. Furthermore, he must be given to understand that if he does not live such a life from youth up to manhood, the doors of respectable homes shall be closed to him.

Let society *instruct* the young men of the land upon this subject of the

TO HIS DAUGHTERS.

Great Black Plague that they may no longer plead ignorance as a cause for their enrollment in the great army of impurity. To this extent the true remedy, because the only immediately available remedy, is the remedy suggested—Education.

Then, my dear young girls, let the women of the land arise in their might and demand that there be no longer a double standard of morality. Let them demand that there be the same degree of irreproachable morality for young men and young women alike. Then and then only will the women of the land be freed from those shackles which are holding them and their children in bondage

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to disgrace, disease, mutilation, and very often death.

The same degree of chastity for men and women alike—let that be your war cry.

But, my dear girls, I must come to a conclusion, lest I weary you. If perchance I have not made myself clear on certain points, be free to write and ask questions. I shall consider it a duty and a privilege to further enlighten you upon any part of this subject which you still do not understand.

And now, my dear daughters, having thus written to you upon this subject that you may avoid what I have included under the title of the Great Black Plague, I leave this message

TO HIS DAUGHTERS.

with you in conclusion: "You are your sister's keeper."

THE SECOND LETTER

The Second Letter

MY DEAR DAUGHTERS:

Your letter in answer to my first letter to you was received some time ago, and this is my first opportunity to write in reply.

I am glad that my former letter opened up for you and, to some extent at least, made clear an important subject about which you and your school-mates confess utter ignorance; a subject, moreover, about which, as you also say, you often wanted to ask, but, filled with the same timidity and modesty that have made of society a false teacher, you refrained from inquiring about those things in which

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we as your parents ought to have instructed you without your asking.

I see that you in common with many, many other persons are confusing the two words, innocence and ignorance.

Let me make these two words clear, by explanation and illustration. "Ignorance" is from the Latin word "*ignorare*," and means "not knowing, untaught, destitute of knowledge."

The word carries with it only a negative force, for the state of ignorance is un-moral.

"Ignorant of guilt, I fear not shame," says the poet.

"Innocent" is from the Latin word "*in-nocens*," and means "not hurt or

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harméd, free from guilt, not tainted with sin."

I like to attribute innocence to that person who is free from guilt, but who knows that guilt exists.

The fond mother looking into the eye of her baby exclaims, "Isn't she innocent!"

No; the baby is ignorant, unmoral. The man who took his daughter to a school and said: "My daughter is as innocent as a baby," meant that his daughter was as ignorant as a baby.

A girl may be ignorant and yet not innocent; as an illustration, let me cite the following from my case book:

Miss Blank, a school girl, age fif-

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teen years and seven months, daughter of good, honest, hard-working parents. She manifested the evidence of unfolding womanhood at the age of thirteen years. At this critical period of the young girl's life, her mother made unsuccessful attempts to instruct her upon matters relating to sexual hygiene, but the daughter literally ran away from her mother's instruction, as from something she ought not to hear. In the month of December her mother brought the girl to my office. After a careful questioning and examination, I came to my conclusion, which I did not at that time share with the mother. In March, the still un-knowing mother again brought her daughter to my of-

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fice ; stern time and inexorable nature had confirmed my diagnosis. This young girl, still in her teens, still in the schools, herself a mere child, and unmarried, was soon to become a mother. It may be beyond credence, but it is an actual fact, which I learned from carefully guarded questions, that, although this young girl did know that certain immoral acts committed before she had entered upon womanhood did involve private shame, yet she did not know that such indiscreet acts after puberty may possibly and most probably would cause a public disgrace.

This girl was not innocent. She knew that her conduct was wrong. She knew that she was not free from

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guilt; but she was ignorant of the possible and probable results of her guilt. The girl was ignorant, but not innocent. The proper knowledge of the physiology of the change which marks the entrance upon womanhood would have helped this girl to retain her innocence. Her age, please remember, was only a little more than fifteen years; and yet she was soon to become a mother! The only ray of consolation in this tragedy for the mother of the erring girl was the fact that she had made earnest attempts to instruct her daughter.

A girl may be ignorant and also innocent; she may be innocent because ignorant of temptations. Here

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again I would say that such a girl is not moral, but un-moral.

Again, a girl may be innocent and not ignorant. Knowing the temptations that are ever ready to assail young girls, and knowing the laws of nature and the laws of her own physical being, an intelligent young girl becomes a moral being and as such is much more likely to remain a comfort to her parents, and an honor to her sex. Her mental development grows apace with her physical development and helps her to retain her innocence.

I shall now discuss the case of one of your friends who, you say, read

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my letter. You say that my letter gave her the impression, a wrong impression, that these social diseases could not be cured. You also say that this girl's brother has informed her that her fiance contracted gonorrhea several years ago.

My reference in my first letter to the young bride who lost her life on account of gonorrheal blood-poisoning after her first baby was born, you say, has alarmed your friend, and that she is now contemplating breaking her engagement, and, being intensely in love with the young man, is almost heart-broken.

You ask me what would I advise? Well, my dear girls, I have elsewhere advised all parents and broth-

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ers (and it is a remarkable fact that whereas brothers may become infected with disease, yet the same brothers would do all in their power to prevent a sister from marrying a man who once had been similarly infected) to secure from their prospective sons-in-law and brothers-in-law clean bills of health.

Yes, a young man who has contracted gonorrhea may be cured; but approximately three per cent. of all who are infected are incurable. Let this friend of yours therefore see to it—or have her father or brother see to it, that the young man is cured beyond the shadow of a doubt *before* the wedding takes place. A bill of health may be considered clean if a

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reputable physician, who is equipped to make the proper examination, who has proper opportunities for observing the young man, will give an affidavit to that effect. Let this young friend of yours have such a clean bill of health procured for her. If she can receive such assurance that the young man is cured, then from a *physical* standpoint her marriage would be safe. But can your friend forget that at some period in his life, this young man degraded his young manhood? I believe, as I have said elsewhere, that it is possible for young men to err through ignorance—I must stretch my conscience to make this statement, but to be a little charitable I make the statement,—but

TO HIS DAUGHTERS.

these same young men, having seen the light, having been cured of their folly as well as of their disease, may become true and faithful husbands. I say such *may* be the case.

But, my daughters, upon this particular phase of the subject I feel like quoting the words of an honorable member of our profession who, in his book on "Heredity and Morals," says: "The advice which the average physician might give to the patient—that he might marry five years after the primary infection of syphilis and when no signs had been seen for over two years—would be quite different from his absolute refusal when the syphilitic contemplated marriage with some member of his own family

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even though the suitor had acquired the disease innocently.”

You say you were astonished and horrified at the great number of young men who contract these diseases.

You may well be astonished, and as long as you girls tolerate the company of, and even marry young men who lead dual lives—six nights of the week with questionable characters, and the seventh in the parlors of respectable girls—so long shall these percentages remain as they are, and even increase. But let our girls close their homes to the libertine and ostracise him from decent society, and then the percentages will begin to decrease.

TO HIS DAUGHTERS.

You ask me why in my letter I did not touch upon the subject of secret or solitary vice. You say that there is some such report concerning one of the girls in your school, and that is your reason for making inquiry concerning the subject.

If there is a young girl in your school guilty of such unnatural practices, from your own opinion and from the opinion of all the other girls concerning this girl, would you not say I am right when I say that all the world despises one who thus defiles her own body, and that such a person also despises herself. Can one such girl, you ask, lead astray other girls in the same school? I believe not, at least, not intelligent, wo-

manly girls; she is only a horrible example of degeneracy, and it is only a matter of time when her presence in the school will be tolerated neither by the students themselves nor by the faculty.

Whereas the question of the social diseases is a question which through heredity concerns society, the question of secret vice is an individual one, unless the person marries, which is generally not the case with those who persist in this evil habit. If persisted in, results of this vice, such as a ruined nervous system, injured character, diseases of degeneration, unfit the victim, if a young man, for the high offices of a husband and

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father; and if a young girl, for the high offices of a wife and mother.

Let me sum up this question briefly thus: Secret vice in an adult, if persisted in, is a mark of degeneracy, its devotee never acknowledging his or her defilement, rarely even to his or her own physician.

My letter is not primarily written to or for degenerates. My letter is written to my daughters—and to all other like minded, noble girls—whom I am proud to believe to be womanly young girls. Need I say further why I do not touch upon the subject of secret vice, except thus briefly?

My letter to you, my daughters, was primarily to enlighten you upon

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the great evil of the social, impure diseases which are claiming the lives and health of so many of our young men and women; diseases which are wrecking homes, which are filling the divorce courts,—which, in fine, are the greatest curse of this century, as they were of past centuries.

May you, my dear daughters, be strengthened with the knowledge which you glean from these pages. May these pages help you to avoid a life of wreckage and ruin, the toll demanded by impurity; and may they help you to attain, at the proper time, that happy motherhood, which is woman's honorable estate.

THE THIRD LETTER.
TO PARENTS

The Third Letter.

TO THE PARENTS OF YOUNG GIRLS:

If fathers, if mothers, if physicians of young men and young women, prospective brides and prospective bridegrooms were faithful to the trust imposed upon fathers, upon mothers, upon physicians, do you think, dear parents of young girls, that such a tragedy could be possible, as I here relate?

A refined, attractive, cultured young girl had just graduated from one of the leading schools in the land. Special care was given to her graduating dress, for the dress in which she was to receive her Bachelor of Arts

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degree was to be also her wedding dress. She graduated in the morning, was married in the evening. The wedding was grand. The beautiful young bride was admired by maidens, matrons and old spinsters alike. The bridegroom was a member of the so-called popular set in the young bride's home town. His parents were wealthy, and he, an only son, could have had, and did have all the advantages that money can procure. Money, however, cannot purchase character.

The wedding bells rang long and loud. The newspapers were strong in their praise of the brilliancy of the wedding as a really notable social event. The same papers acclaimed

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the nobleness of the bride, the honor of the bridegroom.

In the midst of the wedding festivities, the bridegroom arose in all his splendor and proposed a toast to the health of his bride. Yes, to the health of the bride, whose every bone, muscle, fibre, and sinew told of health. Her health was drunk, the glasses clicked, the wedding festivities were ended.

The graduating-wedding gown was placed carefully away; the bride put on her traveling suit and with her chosen mate the honeymoon began.

My dear parents of young girls, a few weeks have elapsed since the

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brilliant wedding, and the scene changes.

There is nothing brilliant about the events here to be described, except the brilliancy of rapidity. An ambulance awaits the return of the wedding party, the ambulance attended by grief-stricken parents. The train arrives, the husband, whose heart ought to be broken, if it is not, supervises the placing of his victim into the ambulance; the new bride of a few weeks is hurried to the hospital.

The leading surgeon of the city was procured to perform the operation of mutilation.

It might here be added that the surgeon was not the physician of the bride's family, but the latter was

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present at the operation. The family doctor had brought the young bride into the world, had attended her during all of her short life and when he saw her wrecked young life on the operating table awaiting the surgeon's knife, with tears streaming down his honorable old face, he cried out, "And did I bring her into this world for this?"

The surgeon, after having opened the abdominal cavity of the bride, and after recognizing conditions which confirmed his diagnosis provisionally made in the consulting room, made the possibly injudicious, yet true remark, "This woman's husband is his wife's murderer." The remark was audible to those attend-

ing the operation. The remark was repeated to the young husband by a friend.

The operation was completed—the young patient, now unsexed, was placed in her room, and all aid known to modern medicine and surgery was given her. But the infection had become general, and in twenty-four hours the new bride had succumbed to the ravages of a general peritonitis. The graduating dress by way of the wedding gown had become the burial shroud.

During the evening of the day on which the operation was performed, the surgeon was kept busy in his office answering anxious inquiries of the many friends of the young bride,

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many of whom had recently attended the joyous wedding festivities. And then the young husband came, he who was soon to become a widower by his own act, he who had condemned his beautiful young wife to an ignominious death! He was admitted into the surgeon's private consultation office.

"Doctor," he at once began, "to-day at the operation upon my wife, you remarked, as I have been informed, that the woman's husband was her murderer. Did you make that remark?"

"I did," calmly replied the surgeon.

"Then I will prosecute you," answered the infuriated young man.

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Looking the young man squarely in the eye, the surgeon again calmly, but firmly remarked, "If you were not, then some other man was, *you* know."

If these letters shall prevent only one such horrible tragedy of marriage, then, my dear parents of young girls, the writer shall be amply repaid for making them public.

THE END.

[KBB]

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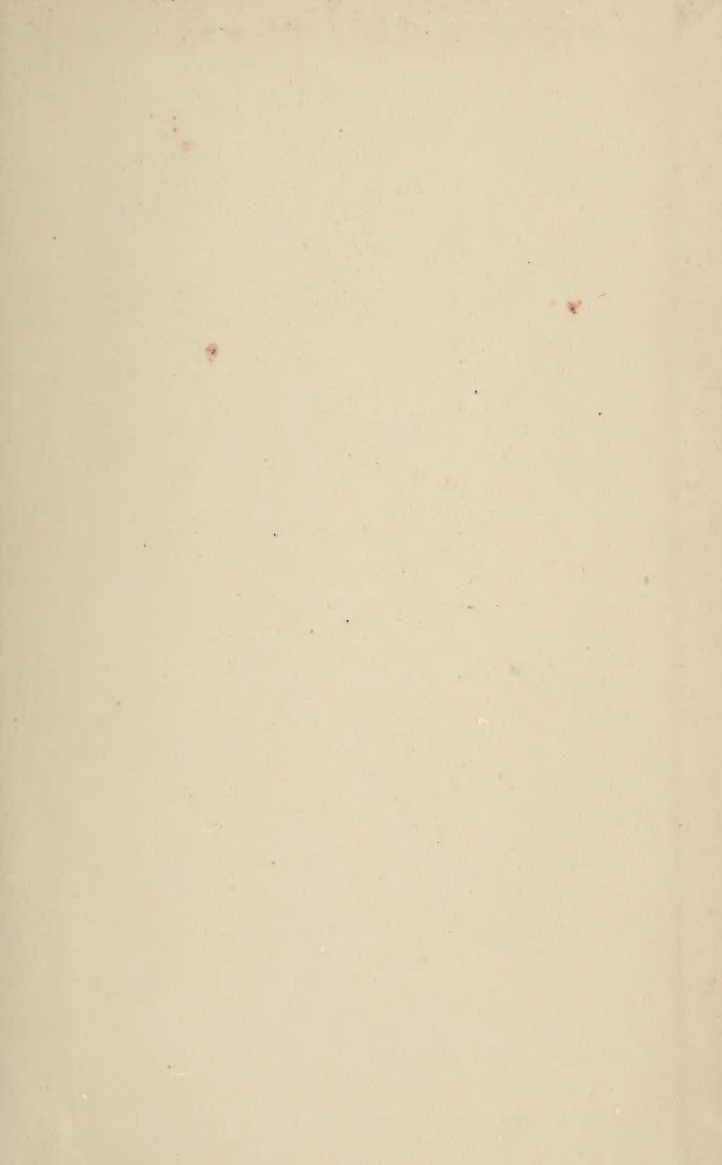
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